

Schedule 1 to the Minutes of the Community Safety Committee meeting of Richmond City Council held on Wednesday, November 14, 2018.

ON TABLE ITEM

Date: Nov. 14, 2018
Meeting: Community Safety
Item: #7

We have waited 8 months for a detailed report, as this is what we were told to expect – not just the summary presented today. We want to see details of when officers were present, how long on each occasion as well as the actual speed on the 335 issued tickets.

This entire project was prompted after Council received an inaccurate, convoluted report from staff and based on said report approved the installation of 20 additional speed bumps on River Road.

The residents of this River Road neighbourhood expressed concern that the City of Richmond approved the implementation of an additional 20 speed humps based on that report when 60% of the surveyed residents opposed this. Concerns were raised as to our personal safety and that of our property if the speed humps were implemented. Residents expressed concerns with regards to speeding vehicles, overweight trucks and illegal cyclist activity on River Road. After our concerns were heard, Council agreed that RCMP enforcement should take place, and a report would be given.

Residents are appreciative of any patrols that take place to keep our neighbourhood safe – we just hope that we are not forgotten now that this report has been presented.

We would like to know when the 34 operations and patrols took place. Were all of the operations in the 22,000 block of River Road? Why was there no enforcement at other locations? As it is indicated that resources were redirected from other RCMP initiatives to this project, I believe that it would be prudent to provide Council and taxpayers with details.

The report states that 3 officers each spent 6 - 10 hour overtime shifts for a total of 180 hours of overtime. When did these 10 hour speed enforcement shifts take place? How many speeding tickets were issued by these 3 officers in 180 hours of overtime?

Speed watch utilized 102 hours of RCMP resources with zero return on this investment, as speeding tickets are not issued during speed watch

The public complaints from the resident noted were not adequately addressed. As mentioned in my full document, there were no RCMP deployments during the times that this resident notified the RCMP that the large, disruptive cycling groups would be travelling on River Road.

We were told that bylaws would enforce illegal truck activity on River Road – is one visit in an 8 month period really considered an acceptable level of service?

As this was an enhanced enforcement, we would expect to see an increase in speed related tickets. I would like to see an 8 month enhanced enforcement on Westminster Hwy for example to compare equally to River Road. It is not fair to compare an enhanced enforcement project with regular enforcement other than to exaggerate the results.

As the digital sign boards do not appear to be effective at reducing speed, we believe that they should be discontinued, with the resources put towards the speed reader signs that are effective.

The conclusion on this report is slightly confusing – there is a recommendation for the consideration of traffic calming and speed limiting features, and then the indication that speed reader signs have resulted in positive reductions in excessive travel speeds. Is this the RCMP's recommendation for traffic calming and speed limiting?

I have provided each of you with a number of questions that we want answered. Rather than read each one out can we have Staff or an RCMP member provide these answers to us today?

1. Dates, times & length of each RCMP deployment on River Road for speed enforcement
2. Actual speed of vehicle on the 365 speeding tickets issued during the above enforcement
3. Why an officer needs to be present during Speed Watch campaigns – I have been advised that the officer is there for the safety of the volunteers, but if there are no traffic stops why can't an auxiliary officer fulfill this roll, freeing up the actual RCMP officer for real police work
4. Why there was no enforcement for the times when it was known that illegal cycling activity would likely occur
5. Why was there only enforcement in the 22000 block of River Road when it is reported that speeding occurs near Valmont Way as confirmed by the speed reader signs
6. Why is our neighbourhood being neglected when it comes to bylaw enforcement on illegal trucks travelling on River Road
7. Can we expect to see a similar 8 month enhanced enforcement on Westminster Hwy to have a fair comparison for speed related tickets issued in Richmond
8. Will our neighbourhood be forgotten by the RCMP and Richmond Bylaws now that this campaign has concluded
9. Are the speed reader signs that are to be installed further east on River Road the RCMP's recommendation for traffic calming and speed limiting
10. Will there be a forthcoming update following the installation of the additional speed reader signs

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We have anxiously been awaiting this report, and I have to say that I am really disappointed in the lack of details. Even though at the General Purpose Committee Meeting of April 16, 2018 Sargent Nigel Pronger advised Council that the report would be detailed (GP committee minutes), the report presented is only a summary. We would like to see details of when officers were present, how long on each occasion as well as the actual speed noted on the tickets issued. Following my review of the report, please find my comments on each section:

Origin

Background

Fatal Motor Vehicle Incidents on River Road

River Road is unique to other areas of Richmond in that if you leave the road on either side there is a very good chance that you will not survive, as drowning in either the Fraser River or in the deep water filled ditch is a grave possibility as was the case in 3 of the reported fatal incidents. Any loss of life is tragic, but it is difficult to believe that any type of traffic calming could have prevented those noted on River Road. This paragraph is for effect, and has no bearing on the objective of the report – to advise the outcome of the enforcement campaign.

2018 River Road Project

I would like to clarify the residents' position on why this project was initiated. The residents of this River Road neighbourhood expressed concern that the City of Richmond approved the implementation of an additional 20 speed humps when 60% of the surveyed residents opposed this. Concerns were raised as to our personal safety and that of our property if the speed humps were implemented. Residents expressed concerns with regards to speeding vehicles, overweight trucks and illegal cyclist activity on River Road. After our concerns were heard, Council agreed that RCMP enforcement should take place, and a status update would be given.

Analysis

Education and Safety Awareness Campaigns

I did not see or hear any safety concerns regarding River Road during the 8 month period. Perhaps the RCMP public relations department should consider that not everyone is on twitter or Facebook and use "old school" methods – like actually talking to the media.

Speed Watch Deployments

Speed watch as an educational tool is a waste of RCMP resources. Drivers who receive these letters know that there are no repercussions. To have effect, the letters sent should be entered into a database so that if a vehicle is stopped for speeding the officer can easily access information pertaining to the number of warnings a driver has received – perhaps if there have been no warning in the past the officer may be inclined to let the driver off with a warning – but if there are multiple warning letters, this should reflect in the issuance of a ticket. Could an auxiliary constable not be used for speed watch and save the officer for actual policing?

Cyclist Engagement

It is offensive to the residents of River Road to read that “No violation tickets were issued to cyclists as no offences were observed during the deployment.” The officer in charge of this project was advised when the large groups of cyclists who do not obey the law travel on River Road, however, there were never any deployments at these times. The small groups noted in the report have never been an issue.

Community Engagement

Residents are appreciative of any patrols that take place in our neighbourhood – we just hope that we are not forgotten now that this report has been presented.

Increased Enforcement

We would like to know when the 34 operations and patrols took place (CS-53). Were all of the operations in the 22,000 block of River Road? Why was there no enforcement at other locations? As it is indicated that resources were redirected from other RCMP initiatives to this project, I believe that it would be prudent to provide Council and taxpayers with details.

The report indicates that 6 of the operations were conducted by 3 officers on overtime for 180 hours of overtime (CS-53) – when did this occur and how many hours did the officers attend on each occasion? The numbers given would indicate that each of the officers attended for a 10 hour period on each of the 6 days. How many speeding tickets did the 3 officers issue? How many other violation tickets did these 3 officers issue?

Enforcement of Truck Weight Limit

April 3, 2018 – General Purpose Committee (GP-33)

Residents identified continued concerns with truck operations on River Road, particularly turning trucks (drivers may cross the centreline) or drivers apparently failing to respect the posted load limit signage. They emphasized the importance of increased enforcement to address what, in their opinion, is the primary road safety concern.

There is a 9-tonne load limit in effect on River Road between No.7 Road and Westminster Highway. Richmond RCMP advise that joint enforcement operations are regularly conducted with Community Bylaws staff, who have primary responsibility for enforcement of trucks on weight-limited roads. Most recently, Richmond RCMP conducted a joint operation with Community Bylaws on March 16, 2018 where City bylaw officers issued 18 bylaw infraction municipal tickets to 15 separate truck drivers on River Road, in addition to 24 RCMP-issued speeding tickets to other vehicle drivers. Richmond RCMP and Community Bylaws will continue to regularly conduct joint operations.

The report presented today indicates that:

“Richmond Bylaws issued 19 municipal violations to commercial vehicles when conducting joint operations. Police did not observe many overweight vehicles during this project.”

We would like to know why this “project” appears to be limited to 1 joint operation with Community Bylaws (if there was a second operation, 1 infraction ticket was issued – or the number in one of the reports is inaccurate), as on April 3, 2018 at the General Purpose Committee Meeting, Council was advised that 18 bylaw infractions were issued on March 16, 2018.

We residents have long been concerned with the illegal trucks contributing to the safety issues on River Road, and so we ask – why 1 day? We have seen reports where the Bylaw department has advised Council that they have sufficient staff to do the necessary enforcement in Richmond – so why is our neighbourhood being neglected?

Calls for Service / MVIs / Public Complaints

The public complaints from the resident noted were not adequately addressed. As previously mentioned, there were no RCMP deployments during the times that this resident notified the RCMP that the large, disruptive cycling groups would be travelling on River Road.

Summary of Richmond RCMP Findings

As this was an enhanced enforcement, we would expect to see an increase in speed related tickets. I would like to see an 8 month enhanced enforcement on Westminster Hwy for example to compare equally to River Road. It is not fair to compare an enhanced enforcement project with regular enforcement. The digital sign boards do not appear to be effective at reducing speed, and should be discontinued, with the resources put towards the speed reader signs.

HUB Cycling Assessment Report.

Doing an assessment in March is not relative to the problem cyclists on River Road – summer would have been more meaningful.

Before and After Travel Speed Data

The speed reader signs were found to work to reduce travel speeds. The effectiveness of these placed nearer the 22000 block will be determined once they are placed.

Conclusion

The conclusion on this report is slightly confusing – there is a recommendation for the consideration of traffic calming and speed limiting features, and then the indication that speed reader signs have resulted in positive reductions in excessive travel speeds. Is this the RCMP's recommendation for traffic calming and speed limiting?

Summary of questions that I would like answered:

1. Dates, times & length of each RCMP deployment on River Road for speed enforcement
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